

Message Text

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13-12
ACTION IO-03

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EA-06 EUR-08 AF-04 NEA-07 ARA-06

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FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6042
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
USLO PEKING
CINCPAC HONO HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SINGAPORE 4016

LIMDIS

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, ASEAN, KS, SN
SUBJ: SINGAPORE FOREIGN MINISTER'S PERCEPTIONS OF COLOMBO
NONALIGNED SUMMIT

SUMMARY: FOREIGN MINISTER RAJARATNAM BELIEVES THAT SITUATION
WITHIN NONALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM) HAS IMPROVED, WITH GREATER
NUMBER OF NATIONS MOVING TOWARD GENUINE NONALIGNMENT. HE NOTED
IN THIS RESPECT THAT A "SURPRISING" NUMBER OF COUNTRIES
HAD EXPRESSED ORAL RESERVATIONS ON KOREAN RESOLUTION, INCLUDING
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SINGAPORE, AND ADDED THAT WRITTEN RESERVATIONS WOULD BE SUB-

MITTED BY A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES, ALSO INCLUDING SINGAPORE, REGARDING DECOLONIZATION RESOLUTION (WHICH INCLUDED PUERTO RICO ISSUE). RAJARATNAM DESCRIBED IN SOME DETAIL THE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN MALAYSIA AND LAOS, WITH SRV STANDING BEHIND LAOS, OVER THEIR CONFLICTING RESOLUTIONS. SINGAPORE HAD URGED MALAYSIANS NOT TO PUSH THEIR "ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM, AND NEUTRALITY (ZPFN)" RESOLUTION ON GROUNDS IT WOULD LIKELY GENERATE SRV OBJECTIONS, BUT NOW FELT THAT THIS CONTROVERSY WAS A GOOD THING BECAUSE IT REVEALED SRV'S TRUE COLORS. IN SINGAPORE'S JUDGMENT, LAOTIAN RESOLUTION NOT ONLY ATTACKED ASEAN NATIONS FOR LACKING GENUINE INDEPENDENCE BUT ARROGATED RIGHT TO COMMUNIST NATIONS TO INTERVENE IN THEIR AFFAIRS. RAJARATNAM IS ATTEMPTING TO ARRANGE ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING TO PURSUE THIS MATTER FURTHER, WITH INTENTION OF CHALLENGING THE SRV IN THIS RESPECT BY MEANS OF A JOINT STAND AGAINST THE LAOTIAN RESOLUTION. INTER ALIA RAJARATNAM INDICATED THAT NORTH KOREA'S BEHAVIOR AT SUMMIT HAD OFFENDED MANY PARTICIPANTS, MOST NOTABLY IN ITS EFFORTS TO GAIN A SEAT ON THE NACC. END SUMMARY.

1. AT FOREIGN MINISTER RAJARATNAM'S REQUEST, I CALLED ON HIM IN HIS OFFICE AUGUST 24 AND RECEIVED A BRIEFING ON HIS PERCEPTIONS OF THE COLOMBO NONALIGNED SUMMIT. I FOUND RAJARATNAM FAIRLY WELL PLEASED WITH THE WAY THINGS HAD GONE, ALTHOUGH IT TRANSPIRED THAT HE WAS INCLINED TO FOCUS MORE ON ACTIVITIES OF SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM (SRV) AND "LAOTIAN DOCTRINE" THAN ANYTHING ELSE (SEE BELOW).

2. RAJARATNAM BEGAN BY EXPRESSING BELIEF THAT SITUATION WITHIN NONALIGNED MOVEMENT HAD IMPROVED SINCE LIMA CONFERENCE LAST YEAR, IN THAT INCREASING NUMBER OF NAM NATIONS WERE "DIS-INCLINED" TO SPEND ALL THEIR TIME ATTACKING "WESTERN IMPERIALISTS" AND THE U.S. SIMILARLY, THERE WAS TENDENCY NOT TO FOLLOW BLINDLY ALONG LINE LAID DOWN BY PRO-SOVIET NATIONS, WITH EXCEPTION OF COURSE OF THE SOVIET "CLIQUE". AS INSTANCE OF INCREASED TREND TOWARD GENUINE NONALIGNMENT, RAJARATNAM CITED VOTE ON KOREAN ITEM, IN WHICH "SURPRISING" NUMBER OF NATIONS, INCLUDING SINGAPORE, HAD EXPRESSED ORAL RESERVATIONS. HE MENTIONED ALSO THAT DUE TO FACT RESOLUTION ON DECOLONIZATION HAD NOT BEEN PRESENTED PRIOR TO COMPLETION OF NONALIGNED

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SUMMIT, A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES WERE PLANNING TO SUBMIT WRITTEN RESERVATIONS. SINGAPORE WOULD BE AMONG THIS NUMBER, AND ITS RESERVATIONS WOULD INCLUDE THE PUERTO RICAN ISSUE. RAJARATNAM ADDED THAT ON CERTAIN ISSUES, WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS "SHIBBOLETH", THERE WAS STILL GENERAL UNANIMITY: SOUTH AFRICA, RHODESIA, AND EVEN ISRAEL. I TOOK THIS OPPORTUNITY TO NOTE THAT PRIME MINISTER LEE KUAN YEW'S MESSAGE TO THE NONALIGNED SUMMIT HAD REPORTEDLY CREATED A VERY GOOD IMPRESSION AND HAD PUT SINGAPORE

ON RECORD AS WORKING TOWARD POSITIVE ECONOMIC GOALS.

3. COMING CLOSER TO HOME, AS RAJARATNAM PUT IT, HE TURNED TO SITUATION GENERATED BY MALAYSIAN CONFRONTATION WITH LAOS AND SRV OVER ASEAN ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY (ZPFN) VERSUS LAOTIAN RESOLUTION EXTOLLING "VICTORIES WON BY THE PEOPLES OF LAOS, VIETNAM AND KAMPUCHEA" WHICH "HAVE CREATED A NEW SITUATION MODIFYING THE BALANCE OF FORCES IN SEA IN FAVOR OF THE FORCES OF PEACE, NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE, DEMOCRACY AND SOCIAL PROGRESS". ACCORDING TO RAJARATNAM HE HAD URGED MALAYSIANS NOT TO INJECT ZPFN INTO NAS PROCEEDINGS, SINCE IT HAD ALREADY BEEN ACCEPTED AT ALGIERS CONFERENCE AND HENCE WAS PART OF NAM DOGMA, AND ALSO BECAUSE SRV MIGHT OBJECT TO IT BECAUSE TWO OF ASEAN MEMBERS PARTICIPATING IN KUALA LUMPUR DECLARATION PROCLAIMING ZPFN HAD BEEN ENEMIES OF SRV DURING THE VIETNAM WAR. THIS ANALYSIS HAD PROVED TO BE CORRECT, WITH SRV CLEARLY HAVING PUT THE LAOTIAN DELEGATION UP TO PRESENTING ITS OWN RESOLUTION (WHICH WAS OF COURSE ANTI-ZPFN) AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR MALAYSIAN RESOLUTION.

4. WITH BATTLE LINES THUS DRAWN, QUESTION BECAME WHETHER TO REJECT ONE RESOLUTION IN FAVOR OF THE OTHER, OR ATTEMPT TO WORK OUT SOME COMPROMISE. MALAYSIANS AND INDONESIANS DID NOT CONSIDER LANGUAGE OF LAOTIAN RESOLUTION ALL THAT OFFENSIVE, AND WERE PREPARED TO ACCEPT IT PROVIDED MALAYSIAN RESOLUTION WAS ALSO ACCEPTED. HOWEVER, SINGAPORE SAW IN IT NOT ONLY A SRV ATTACK ON ASEAN NATIONS FOR LACKING GENUINE INDEPENDENCE PRIOR TO COMMUNIST VICTORY IN VIETNAM, BUT ARROGATION BY COMMUNIST COUNTRIES OF RIGHT TO INTERVENE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF ASEAN COUNTRIES TO HELP THEM "BECOME TRULY INDEPENDENT, PACIFIC AND NEUTRAL". ACCORDINGLY, SINGAPORE SENT MEMBER OF ITS DELEGATION INTO POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEETING WHICH WAS DISCUSSING THE ISSUE AND POINTED OUT THESE PARTICULAR

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FACTORS OF LAOTIAN RESOLUTION. MANY NAM COUNTRIES SAW MERITS OF SINGAPORE POSITION, ON GROUNDS THAT IT WOULD CREATE BAD PRECEDENT FOR ONE NAM COUNTRY TO CLAIM RIGHT TO INTERVENE IN AFFAIRS OF OTHER NAM COUNTRIES. UPSHOT WAS THAT SMALL WORKING GROUP WAS SET UP, INCLUDING MALAYSIA, LAOS, AND TANZANIA TO SEE IF SOME FORM OF COMPROMISE COULD BE WORKED OUT.

5. MEANWHILE, SRV DELEGATION INFORMED SINGAPOREANS THAT THEY WOULD BE WILLING TO WITHDRAW "THEIR RESOLUTION" (THUS ACKNOWLEDGING THAT THEY WERE BEHIND LAOTIAN ACTION) IF MALAYSIAN RESOLUTION WAS ALSO WITHDRAWN. SINGAPORE WOULD HAVE BEEN HAPPY TO GO ALONG BUT MALAYSIA REFUSED, AND WHEN SMALL WORKING GROUP BECAME DEADLOCKED THE MALAYSIANS RAISED THE ISSUE AGAIN IN THE PLENARY. THE TIMING WAS VERY BAD; CONFERENCE WAS IN ITS LAST STAGES AND EVERYONE ATTENDING WAS ANXIOUS TO BRING

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-14 EA-06 EUR-08 AF-04 NEA-07 ARA-06

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 INR-05 NSC-05 PRS-01 H-01 L-01

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R 250822Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6043

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

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PROCEEDINGS TO A CLOSE. WHEN CHAIRMAN, FELIX DIAZ BANDARANAIKE RULED MALAYSIA OUT OF ORDER, THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE APPLAUSE. ISSUE STILL REMAINS UNRESOLVED, WITH ACCEPTANCE OF ZPFN BY ALGIERS CONFERENCE NOW OPEN TO QUESTION.

6. IN RAJARATNAM'S OPINION, THIS WHOLE SERIES OF EVENTS WAS A GOOD THING BECAUSE IT SHOWED UP THE SRV IN ITS TRUE COLORS. DESPITE FRIENDLY FACADE PRESENTED BY SRV DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER PHAN HIEN IN HIS TOUR OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNTRIES, THE BASIC SRV ATTITUDE TOWARD ITS NEIGHBORS WAS REVEALED AS

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BEING UNCHANGED. AT LEAST, RAJARATNAM SAID, SINGAPORE PROPOSED TO INQUIRE FURTHER INTO SRV POLICIES AND TRY TO ESTABLISH JUST WHERE HANOI STOOD ON QUESTION OF GENUINE INDEPENDENCE AND ON RIGHT TO INTERVENE IN ITS NEIGHBORS' INTERNAL AFFAIRS. RAJARATNAM CONTRASTED THE HARD SRV STAND IN SUPPORT OF LAOTIAN RESOLUTION WITH THE MUCH MORE MODERATE LINE EXPRESSED IN SPEECH BY PHAM VAN DONG, AND IN FACT BY FRIENDLY DEMEANOR ASSUMED BY SRV REPRESENTATIVES, AND WONDERED IF THIS DISPARITY MIGHT BE ATTRIBUTABLE TO FACTIONAL DIFFERENCES IN HANOI.

7. RAJARATNAM STATED THAT NORTH KOREAN BEHAVIOR AT NAS OFFENDED MANY PARTICIPANTS. MOST NOTICEABLE WAS ITS EFFORTS TO BE NAMED AS MEMBER OF EXPANDED NACC. AT SINGAPORE'S SUGGESTION, ON QUESTION OF ASIAN NATIONS TO BE MEMBERS OF NACC ASIA WAS TO BE DIVIDED INTO THREE REGIONS: WESTERN, SOUTH, AND SOUTHEAST, WITH TWO NACC MEMBERS FROM EACH REGION. NORTH KOREA OBJECTED STRONGLY TO THIS PROCEDURE BUT WAS EVENTUALLY VOTED DOWN. EVENTUALLY COMPROMISE WAS PROPOSED IN WHICH INDONESIA WOULD REPLACE MALAYSIA AS ONE SOUTHEAST ASIAN REPRESENTATIVE WITH REMAINING POSITION TO BE CHOSEN FROM EITHER SRV OR NORTH VIETNAM BY SECRET BALLOT. NORTH KOREA AGAIN STRONGLY OBJECTED, KNOWING IT WOULD LOSE (WHICH ACTUALLY WAS THE RESULT). COMPETITION BETWEEN SRV AND NORTH KOREA LED OBSERVERS TO CONCLUDE THAT COMMUNIST COUNTRIES WERE OBVIOUSLY NOT ALL THAT UNIFIED.

8. AS FOLLOW-UP TO SUMMIT, RAJARATNAM IS NOW ATTEMPTING TO ARRANGE SPECIAL ASEAN MEETING TO CONSIDER A JOINT STAND AGAINST LAOTIAN RESOLUTION (IN FACT, I WAITED FIFTEEN MINUTES FOR HIM PRIOR TO HIS BRIEFING WHILE HE WAS ON THE TELEPHONE ON THIS SUBJECT WITH ANOTHER ASEAN COUNTRY). HE HOPES ASEAN COUNTRIES AS A GROUP WILL CHALLENGE SRV STAND, AS EXPRESSED VIA LAOTIAN RESOLUTION. TO THIS END, HE WANTS ASEAN MEETING AT FOREIGN MINISTERS LEVEL SINCE AT SENIOR OFFICERS LEVEL THE THAI REPRESENTATIVE WOULD BE ANAN, WHO WOULD NOT PROBABLY GO ALONG. ON THE OTHER HAND, PHICHAU MIGHT BE PERSUADED EVEN THOUGH THE THAI APPEAR TO BE LEANING OVER BACKWARD TO APPEASE THE SRV. INDONESIA AND THE PHILIPPINES MIGHT ALSO AGREE. IN THE CASE OF INDONESIA, RAJARATNAM FELT THAT THE INDONESIAN MILITARY WERE LIKELY TO BE SYMPATHETIC TO SINGAPORE'S EFFORT. AS FOR MALAYSIA, RAJARATNAM OBSERVED THAT FOREIGN MINISTER

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RITHAUDDEEN HAD SAID ON HIS RETURN TO KUALA LUMPUR SOMETHING

TO EFFECT THAT "IT TAKES TIME FOR OLD WOUNDS TO HEAL" MEANING THAT MALAYSIA DID NOT WANT TO CHALLENGE HANOI TOO DIRECTLY.

9. COMMENT: THE VERSION OF SUMMIT PROCEEDINGS PRESENTED BY RAJARATNAM QUITE CLEARLY REFLECTED SINGAPORE'S OWN UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE AND MAY NOT COINCIDE WITH ACCOUNTS OF OTHER PARTICIPANTS. IT SOMEHOW SEEMS TO US RATHER LATE IN THE GAME FOR SINGAPORE TO RAISE THE QUESTION OF HANOI'S BASIC POLICIES TOWARD ITS SOUTHEAST ASIAN NEIGHBORS, GIVEN DISPOSITION ON THE PART OF MOST TO TAKE HANOI AT FACE VALUE AND GLOSS OVER INCONSISTENCIES IN SRV LINE. PERHAPS IT IS WORTH A TRY, THOUGH. RAJARATNAM'S RATHER FAVORABLE OVERALL DESCRIPTION OF NAM SUGGESTS THAT REGARDLESS OF THE NAM'S INTERNAL CONTRADICTIONS, SINGAPORE CONTINUES TO ATTACH A HIGH VALUE TO ITS NAM MEMBERSHIP. HOLDRIDGE

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